
BOOK REVIEWS

Milton Kramer, M.D., Editor

HAROLD G. WOLFF'S *STRESS AND DISEASE*. Second Edition. Revised and edited by *Stewart Wolf, M.D.*, and *Helen Goodell, B.S.* Springfield, Ill., Charles C Thomas, 1968, 277 pages.

When Harold Wolff died in 1962 he had been working on an extensive revision of this book which was published first in 1952 while this field was developing rapidly. Stewart Wolf and Helen Goodell, who had both worked closely with Harold Wolff, have produced a new book from data accumulated by Dr. Wolff, from three of his major lectures and from their knowledge of the publications through 1966 of former co-workers with Dr. Wolff now scattered throughout the world.

The result is a most comprehensive textbook of Psychosomatic Medicine encompassed in fewer than 300 pages. It is also a scientific treatise understandable to the intelligent layman on biological processes of adaptation and disease as these are influenced by social circumstances and their meanings to man. It can be highly recommended as basic reading to psychiatrists, other physicians and physiological, behavioral and social scientists.

Six meaty detailed chapters are bracketed between an orienting chapter on the nature of stress for man and a final formulation from a lecture by Stewart Wolf on "Disease as a Way of Life." The concept of stress basic to this volume is of a dynamic state within the human organism, for purposes of adaptation, which is prone to disorders or disease in reaction to circumstances of threatening significance. Many of the stress diseases can be understood as bodily reactions "as if" in anticipation of a threat such as blood loss, starvation, or a need for increased effort or to devour one's enemies.

A chapter on methods of investigation presents a succinct account of the combined clinical and experimental techniques of the Wolff and Wolf tradition. Individuals with extreme or unusual manifestations of disease are carefully studied by physical measurements at the same time as an understanding is being obtained of their perceptions and attitudes by observation, diaries and "stress interviews" planned in accordance with knowledge of the individuals as persons. Ecological studies are being extended to groups, especially by Hinkle, with careful physical measurements as the data for epidemiologic correlations.

The most lengthy chapter, on adaptive reaction patterns, reports the details of such human experiments on reactions in various organ systems: the head, the airways, the gastro-intestinal tract, the cardiovascular system, the genito-urinary system, the endocrine glands and metabolism, the central nervous system, and the skin, plus states of under or over nutrition. This chapter alone constitutes a fairly complete survey of pathopsychophysiology for the practicing physician.

Two chapters on "the organization of reaction patterns" and "the brain and the adaptive process" are of considerable theoretical interest for the coordination of knowledge of neurophysiology and behavior. These chapters do not have as obvious practical value as the previous one but they range widely in human interest, from skin temperature changes in response to a Roosevelt speech to the behavior of prisoners of war.

A chapter on patterns of social adjustment and disease adds a sociological and anthropological perspective to psychosomatic medicine. Material on the effects of rapid social change and stress producing factors in the American culture is particularly convincing with regard to the importance of a social orientation in the future of medicine.

The penultimate chapter is a neat little primer on the psychotherapeutic aspects of the medical management of patients with stress diseases. In 13 pages one might expect little more than platitudes about the physician-patient relationship but this chapter presents practical suggestions for interviewing and wise perspective on the combined use of physical agents and a psychotherapeutic approach as well as on the contribution of social agencies and paramedical personnel to strengthen the therapeutic effort.

Trying hard to criticize this volume one might comment on the variations in writing related to the three separate authors. However, it is not possible to recognize which parts are from each author's pen except for the concluding chapter which is labelled as written

by Stewart Wolf and ends with a quotation from Harold Wolff. In fact, the fairly frequent change of pace in exposition adds to the readability of this book which will undoubtedly remain a classic among medical publications.—W. Donald Ross, M.D., Cincinnati, Ohio.

THE DRINKER'S ADDICTION. By Francis T. Chambers, Jr. Springfield, Ill., Charles C Thomas, 1968, 143 pages.

Intended for the intelligent layman, Francis T. Chambers, Jr., has written a book on his approach to the alcoholic, or, as he prefers, the addicted drinker. From a dynamic, basically psychoanalytic orientation he first discusses the regressive effects of drinking alcohol. He differentiates this in normal and abnormal drinkers and takes up some symptoms of having an addiction. Because there is no sharp line of demarcation between normal and abnormal drinking the author further identifies the addicted drinker. It is his belief that abnormal drinking is of a psychological rather than a physiological etiology and he goes into some of the psychological mechanisms of addicted drinking. The last portion of the book deals with his theory of treatment, approach to treatment, and treatment.

Mr. Chambers writes from a two-fold background; many years ago he was an addicted drinker who was able to relinquish the habit; since 1938 he has worked with the psychiatric staff at the Institute of the Pennsylvania Hospital. In 1958 he was appointed Special Consultant in Problems of Alcohol. With Dr. Edward A. Strecker he was co-author of a previous book on the subject, *Alcohol: One Man's Meat*.

Mr. Chambers considers himself one member of a team working with the patient. The other member of the team is a physician. When appropriate, as in dealing with acute intoxication or withdrawal symptoms, this is initially an internist. Upon resolution of these problems, or in the event they are never present, a psychiatrist becomes the physician part of the team. It is the psychiatrist's job to evaluate and deal with the underlying emotional disturbances. When the drinker will not agree to this the internist continues as the physician part of the team and the switch is made later if possible. It is my feeling that Mr. Chambers plays a large role in the initial rapport of the team and provides a substantial part of the emotional support necessary for the required abstinence, as well as encouraging and supporting the process of insight reeducative therapy which comes later. Mr. Chambers and the patient work on the addiction complex while the psychiatrist addresses himself to the faulty personality structure that preceded the addiction. The author notes that, when successful, the entire process takes about five years.

Since this book is written for the laity, it attempts to avoid technical jargon. This is not, unfortunately, always successful and detracts from the book. It is particularly true of the initial chapters which deal with the psychological concepts. In addition they are somewhat vague, unclear and repetitive. I think they will need to be discussed with the reader. At least they do a good enough job of introducing the usually sticky genetic and dynamic concepts without too much intellectualization.

When Mr. Chambers deals with his ideas and approach to treatment the impact is a personal and emotional one rather than a pedantic and intellectual one. He expresses most convincingly the immensity of the job and the absolute necessity for active participation on the patient's part. He fully appreciates the magnitude of the unmet dependency needs which will occur with abstinence. It is here that I suspect he plays a major and a critical role. As he says of the drinker's abstinence, "This leaves him with his dependency needs all dressed up and nowhere to go. . . ." He has some candid and concise suggestions for the family of the drinker. There are some good, solid, down-to-earth comments that the drinker might use with friends and acquaintances.

For a person who's drinking significantly interferes with his life there is only the alternative of abstinence or destruction. Abstinence is the sine qua non. Abstinence requires emotional support. Some find this through AA, hospitals or clinics, family doctors, religion, friends, or psychiatrists. The approach of Mr. Chambers is a valid one for some people. Others will not be able, as he indicates, to tolerate it; many others cannot afford it. This book is not intended as a do-it-yourself kit, but as an entre for consideration of some basic principles. There will be a few people, relatively speaking, who might want to consider the full fare and enter into a long-term insight reeducative approach. For them this book can